

CLAIMS:

1. A method for operating a buyer-driven electronic marketplace in which a product is traded from a seller to a purchaser, the method comprising:
 - receiving a request to purchase goods from a buyer, the request specifying a type of goods;
 - identifying sellers that generally stock the specified type of goods;
 - communicating the request to purchase goods to the identified sellers;
 - receiving offers to sell the specified goods to the buyer, each of the offers specifying a price of the offered goods;
 - communicating the received offers to the buyer;
 - receiving a product order from the buyer, the product order corresponding to at least one of the received offers;
 - communicating the product order to the seller; and
 - receiving an order confirmation from the seller.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein the request to purchase goods specifies certain characteristics of the specified goods.
3. The method of claim 1 wherein identifying sellers that generally stock the specified type of goods comprises:
 - identifying from a seller database sellers that generally stock the specified type of goods.
4. The method of claim 1 wherein each of the offers to sell specifies certain characteristics of the offered goods.

5. The method of claim 1 and further comprising:
arranging for payment for the sold goods by the buyer to the seller;
and
arranging for shipment of the sold goods from the seller to the
buyer.
6. The method of claim 1 wherein an identity of the buyer is not
conveyed to the seller until receipt of the order confirmation.
7. The method of claim 1 wherein an identity of the seller is not
conveyed to the buyer until receipt of the order confirmation.
8. The method of claim 1 wherein the buyer-driven electronic
marketplace is implemented over the Internet.
9. A buyer-driven electronic marketplace in which a product is traded
from a seller to a purchaser, the marketplace comprising:
means for receiving a request to purchase goods from a buyer, the
request specifying a type of goods;
means for identifying sellers that generally stock the specified type
of goods;
means for communicating the request to purchase goods to the
identified sellers;
means for receiving offers to sell the specified goods to the buyer,
each of the offers specifying a price of the offered goods;
means for communicating the received offers to the buyer;
means for receiving a product order from the buyer, the product
order corresponding to at least one of the received offers;

means for communicating the product order to the seller; and
 means for receiving an order confirmation from the seller.

10. The marketplace of claim 9 wherein the request to purchase goods specifies certain characteristics of the specified goods.

11. The marketplace of claim 9 wherein the means for identifying sellers that generally stock the specified type of goods comprises:

identifying from a seller database sellers that generally stock the specified type of goods.

12. The marketplace of claim 9 wherein each of the offers to sell specifies certain characteristics of the offered goods.

13. The marketplace of claim 9 and further comprising:
 means for arranging for payment for the sold goods by the buyer to the seller; and
 means for arranging for shipment of the sold goods from the seller to the buyer.

14. The method of claim 9 wherein an identity of the buyer is not conveyed to the seller until receipt of the order confirmation.

15. The method of claim 9 wherein an identity of the seller is not conveyed to the buyer until receipt of the order confirmation.

16. The method of claim 9 wherein the buyer-driven electronic marketplace is implemented over the Internet.

17. A method for operating a buyer-driven electronic parts exchange in which a part is traded from a seller to a purchaser, the method comprising:

receiving a request to purchase a part from a buyer, the request specifying a type of the part;

identifying sellers that generally stock the specified type of part;

communicating the request to purchase a part to the identified sellers;

receiving offers to sell the specified part to the buyer, each of the offers specifying a price of the offered part;

communicating the received offers to the buyer;

receiving a product order from the buyer, the product order corresponding to at least one of the received offers;

communicating the product order to the seller; and

receiving an order confirmation from the seller.

18. The method of claim 17 wherein the part exchange is an agricultural machinery parts exchange.

19. The method of claim 17 wherein the parts exchange is an automotive parts exchange.